

What and Where Is Happiness?

The Nearest Approach to It Is In Realization of Proper Finishing of a Task.

As the ancients hunted the spring of eternal life, so all of us search through life for a mental spring of permanent happiness.

In the beginning, youth being selfish, we seek it for ourselves.

Later we try to secure and make it permanent for those whose welfare is more important to us than our own.

The first cry of a newborn child is a protest against unhappiness, discomfort. It has escaped from close, dark confinement into a world of worries, hunger, fear, anxiety.

The last sigh of an old man is a sigh of relief at escaping from a restless life, a sigh of hope that the change following life's end may be better.

Look on any crowd, big or little—every man, woman and child is seeking happiness, or resigned, seeking to escape misery.

Absolute happiness exists nowhere, except for a few moments or hours.

An old miser gloating over his piles of money satisfies a viciously intense passion, but he is not happy. A young spendthrift throwing away money that the miser had saved, applauded by sycophants, is as unhappy as the fool that saved the money to be thus squandered.

A man struggles for position, power, fame, gets all three, and at the end finds comfort in none.

The nearest approach to real happiness on this earth undoubtedly comes in ACCOMPLISHMENT, IN FINISHING, and seeing finished a good piece of work.

Close to absolute happiness was the great Newton when long calculation worked out and proved the accuracy of his theory of gravitation. That was intense intellectual happiness.

But it is less than the happiness of a good mother who at last holds in her arms, washed, dressed, and ready for its first dinner, the little baby that she has created with patience and suffering.

Moments of intense happiness, fortunately for the world, are frequent, and all of them are interesting. An antelope is supremely happy when it grazes with its fellows, a stream of water close by. The lion is happy when he springs accurately, breaks the antelope's back and drinks its blood.

Similarly, millions of peasants have been happy, allowed to cultivate the soil in peace, and conquerors have been happy only when springing successfully in war they have been able to destroy the lives of thousands and take their land.

Alexander the Great, you may be sure, was happy when he wrote the famous letter to Darius, the Persian King, who had offered him his daughter and half his great empire. Alexander's haughty letter ordered the great King to address him, Alexander, as ruler of all Asia.

Galileo was intensely happy when he heard by accident of a double glass invented by a man far off and said to bring objects closer. Immediately he, Galileo, made the first telescope, without ever having seen the first attempt, and with that telescope he saw the moons of Jupiter, the rings of Saturn, and other wonderful mysteries. He was the first man to look into the mysteries of God's creation. Incidentally, he was compelled to deny those truths by others supposed to represent God, but that did not interfere with his happiness.

You can end the happiness of a man like the Kaiser by locking him up in another country and making him ridiculous. But you cannot take from the discoverer of truth the happiness that discovery of truth brings.

Cramer was happy when, standing ready to be burned alive, he first held his hand in the fire and burned it off, saying, "This hand hath offended—this unworthy hand." It was the hand with which he had signed recantation of what he really believed. There is happiness in courage, whether victorious or defeated.

Alexander was happy when he proudly showed his purple cloak to his contented generals, saying that he had made them rich and had got for himself only the cloak, sign of imperial power.

And Nelson was happy when death found him doing his duty, fighting for his country.

One thing is certain: it is important to emphasize the fact that happiness consists in ACCOMPLISHING something, not in merely ESCAPING trouble or living free from worry and suffering.

In the life of such giants as Michael Angelo or Beethoven, both unhappy men, bitterly disappointed, but always working and creating, there was more happiness than in a million ordinary lives.

Nothing more false or harmful was ever uttered than Plato's famous saying, "The man who would be truly happy should not study to enlarge his estate, but to contract his desires."

Not to desire an increased estate in the way of WEALTH is wisdom, of course. Only a poor, grubbing creature without intellectual resources desires more money than he can use usefully, or spend for reasonable comfort and the protection of those dependent upon him.

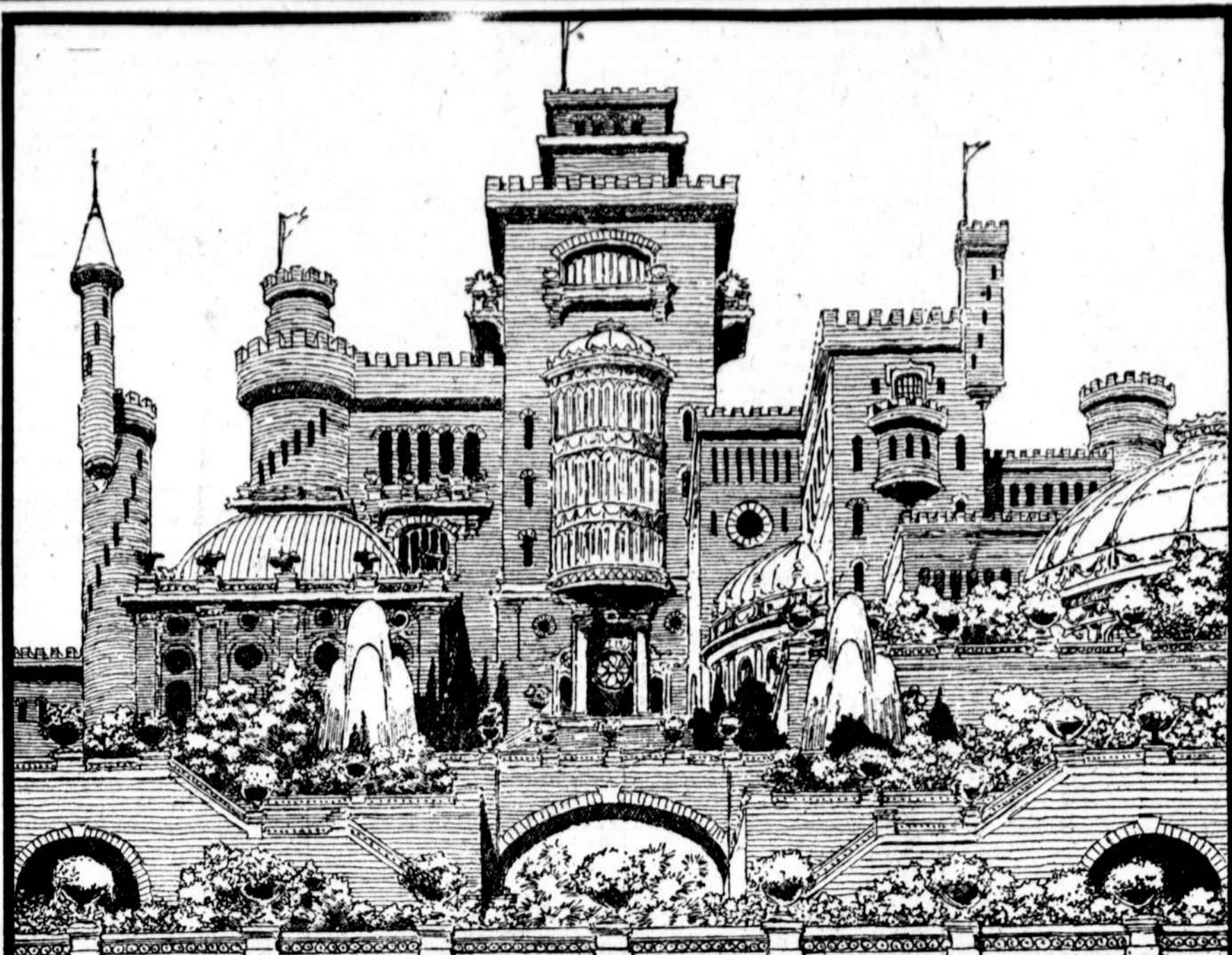
But "to CONTRACT desire" is to begin dying ahead of time. You can judge the greatness of a man by the greatness of his ambition, the expansion of his desires, of his plans, of his effort. And you can judge of the happiness of a man by the realization of increased desires.

Would Columbus have been happier if he had said, "I shall go to India by the old way; why worry about finding a new path?"

Human beings were put upon this earth for some reason more important than their own individual happiness.

In this picture Mr. McCay permits himself a pleasing platitude. Happiness is not necessarily in the humble cottage, which often leaks, usually lacks plumbing, and is rarely tidy like the cottage in this cartoon. Happiness is not necessarily absent from the magnificent palace, although such magnificence often

indicates conceit that interferes with happiness. What is Happiness? Does it exist ABSOLUTELY anywhere? One of the best sayings concerning it is that it is "Difficult to find happiness within ourselves, impossible to find it anywhere else."



It would have been easy enough, had Divine wisdom so willed it, to have kept the human race forever in a Garden of Eden, living without work, never sliding down the hill of sin, never climbing up the mountain of knowledge.

But that evidently was not the plan, for the snake could not have persuaded Eve had Divine power forbidden it. There was work to be done all over the world. Wild beasts had to be exterminated, deserts irrigated, swamps drained. Happiness was to be had only by effort. It came as payment for good work. Happiness is the result of work, men must work, always discontented with themselves to be useful. That the man in his little cottage with nothing else in sight is really happy, as independent, is false.

These things are necessary to happiness: First, FREEDOM, ability to live without asking the permission of any man, and to live without being either the bodily or the salaried slave of any man; second, and more important, happiness depends on ACCOMPLISHMENT. The accomplishment may be great or small, but to bring happiness it must be the BEST that a man can do.

The man that builds well and skillfully the smallest building, or even a table or a chair, may be as happy in a humble way as the engineer building the greatest bridge or constructing the most difficult tunnel.

Happiness is IN WORK, its aids are sobriety, perseverance, regularity, consistency and courage. It takes plenty of courage to fight the obstacles that stand between a man and the happiness of comfort, self-approval and freedom.

The enemies of happiness are many, ENVY for one, which is stupid, and as harmful to happiness as the boll weevil to cotton. Solon, wise man of Greece, said, "Count no man happy until his death." He meant that at any moment unhappiness might come. But there is another truth in his saying.

To the man who works and lives in the right way, death should be looked upon as the runner in a race looks upon the tape stretched across the track at the racer's end. Every athlete strives eagerly toward that tape, and hopes to touch it safely and honorably.

To the man who lives rightly, death is the winning post. If he can reach that safely, if his friends can say of him that from the beginning, when he began weak, until the end, when he ended still weaker, he did as well as he could, all things considered, that man has happiness, and his happiest day should be the day that ends it, and lands him safely at the end of his race.

We are put here to work, and in work only is there happiness. Lucullus, carrying Roman power and civilization into area or rebuilding quick temples and cities, was happy. The same Lucullus, at the feasts with which we associate his name, ending his life in cynical, luxurious idleness, was an unhappy man.

There is happiness in work, great happiness in "good works." "Happy is he that hath mercy on the poor." The best kind of "mercy on the poor" is to fight poverty as a whole, and the ignorance, vice and superstition that create poverty. Happy is the worker. Happy is the teacher.

Is or Is Not Politeness In Public Becoming Extinct?

By BILL PRICE.

Many letters before me discourse interestingly but warmly upon Washington customs of politeness in public—in street cars, elevators, and elsewhere, suggested by a recent editorial:

This is from H. B. ROSSELL:

The custom of men removing their hats in elevators is silly. Why should a man remove his hat, show his bald head, which nobody wants to see, and catch a cold, when he keeps it on in street cars, stores and office buildings? I've seen a man remove his hat

From L. C. MAKER:

In this age of rapidly waning observance of even the ordinary marks of courtesy, it seems a pity that the custom of removing hats in elevators should be viewed with disfavor. The finer sentiments are essential factors in the enjoyment of life. In Boston

Here's one from ROGER L. CALVERT:

Elevators are smaller than street cars and the feeling that a lady is present should be keener. If men would take off their hats oftener there would be fewer bald heads. There are thousands of Washington men who remove their hats in elevators and vacate their seats on cars

Also this most charming letter from LILLIAN MONEY

READ, the Cairo:

Washington is not more polite than other Southern cities. I have lived about all over the United States and I find the farther North one goes the less consideration, outwardly at least, a woman receives. But a man does as he is taught. He does not raise his hat in an elevator for reasons of politeness but because his mother told him when he was a little boy: "Take your hat off before ladies," or "Give that lady your seat."

Some self made men may not have time to observe the niceties of life. A man does not give his seat to a lady in a car because he feels sorry for her, but because he is uncomfortable

able seated when she is standing. It isn't mental equality but physical inequality which should keep this humane custom alive.

Some ambitious young men who have not been fortunate enough to have had the proper guidance when they were young are quick to observe the good manners of others. These men should be encouraged and accepted in good society.

I live in a hotel where without exception or hesitation men remove their hats in the elevator. Those who do not do so elsewhere have discretion enough to emulate gentlemen whose breeding is innate, natural and ineradicable.

HEARD AND SEEN

A. K. REYNOLDS thinks that the worst knocking of Washington car lines is from new people who came here from towns "where there are no cars and it is useless to polish shoes."

Yes, it's a grand feeling when the conductor yells, "Plenty of room up front," and you are so crowded you can't breathe, with peeps punching you in the ribs with their elbows. THELMA B.

I heard a conversation in our department. A woman clerk was telling another that she did not have to work; her husband was a high paid official in the Government service; she was just holding the job to occupy her mind. Ex-service men get the raspberry. MACK.

How many of your readers are afflicted with the hobby of archeology? I've an interesting collection from probably the oldest archaeological depository, those of the Ozarks. A. A. BETNEER.

I am a wounded soldier at Walter Reed. Is it fair that the Government charge a tax on soda and ice cream at the Government canteens of the post? I suppose they will be charging a tax on our wooden legs soon. Y. D. DIVISION.

Only one in every thousand can get this one: There was a thing was four weeks old when Adam was no more. Before that thing was five weeks old Adam was fourcore. Well, come on! MILLO B.

JUGGLING WITH WORDS.

Will Jack Dem-see his finish when he meets the French Car-painter. If Descamps bets all his loose change on Carpentier what will James F. Cor-bet? If Mutt's wife fell overboard little Jeff could not reach her, but would Bud Fisher out? G. T. BRASHEARS.

Justa wot I like to find out is howa Tony Stradivari steala da feedle from homea boss Nicola Amati. A. D. 1799, when does book wot you calla da heestory say Amati die A. D. 1884, bya da bite herself an' Englester like may Stradivari raspa da tune lika da Sardino, da cheap dealea? Make da bees pleasure out of my countrymen. A. PAPPIN.

The young men around 14th and Girard streets are ex-service men with clean records and not Ninth street lamp posts. FITZ.

THOUGHTS OF SPRING.

In the spring the worthy matron Goes and rents another flat. In the spring the giddy maiden Buys herself an Easter hat. In the spring poetic genius Fills afresh his fountain pen. In the spring we doff our flannels—And then put 'em on again! MARY FARMER.

(With apologies to Tennyson.)

We seem to be forgetting all about the principles our boys fought for in Europe. We Americans forget too quick. We're ready to shake hands if the other fellow's hand has anything in it that looks like money. We forget the 50,000 American boys who gave their lives for principles that have never been attained. N. O. P.

I enclose you this clipping from a Philadelphia paper, under head of wanted: "Have your old clothes for poor discharged soldiers." It seems a shame that any former service man should have to beg clothing. Why can't Congress make provision for the wounded and needy? Let's have some action on the Hill. T. R. R.

Have any of the restaurants dropped in their prices for serving eggs since fresh eggs have dropped to 50 cents per dozen? I know some that have not.

in an elevator when a woman entered and make a vile remark about her as she left the car. Saw a married man, with his wife, keep his hat on in an elevator until a strange woman entered and then remove it. Is that chivalry?

It is a common procedure for gentlemen to offer their seats in street cars to ladies and for men and women to offer seats to the old or crippled. In the matter of true chivalry that city is second to none.

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